

Message Text

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73

ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-05 ADP-00 L-03 SCA-01 H-03 /016 W

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R 311445Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 909

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC (OKONGWU, ANNE)

SUBJECT: OKONGWU CHILD CUSTODY CASE

REF: STATE 118186, LAGOS 7037

1. IN CONVERSATION REPORTED LAGOS REFTEL, MRS. OKONGWU IMPLIED SHE WILL CONSULT WITH ATTORNEY ON RETURN TO US ABOUT FUTURE OF CHILD CUSTODY ACTION BROUGHT BY HER IN NEW YORK STATE. SHE COMMENTED THAT HER SAVINGS OF APPROXIMATELY \$7000 HAD ALREADY BEEN EATEN UP BY LEGAL FEES, BUT OTHERWISE GAVE NO SPECIFIC INDICATION WHAT HER DECISION WOULD BE.

2. IN LIGHT HER SEEMING ACCEPTANCE OF EXISTING SITUATION WITH REGARD TO CHILDREN'S PRESENCE IN NIGERIA AND NIGERIAN COURT DECISION, APPEARS FROM HERE THAT MRS. OKONGWU MAY WELL DECIDE TO DROP HER ACTION IN NEW YORK STATE. IF SHE DOES SO, THIS WILL PRESUMABLY REMOVE ISSUE BETWEEN OURSELVES AND FMG OCCASIONED BY FAILURE OF DR. OKONGWU TO APPEAR BEFORE COURT IN ALBANY DESPITE ASSURANCES FROM NIGERIAN CONGEN OFFICER THAT HE WOULD DO SO.

3. GIVEN THIS LIKELY OUTCOME, EMBASSY PLANS MAKE NO FURTHER APPROACH TO MEA ON THIS QUESTION UNLESS MRS. OKONGWU IN FACT PLANS TO MAINTAIN HER ACTION BEFORE NEW YORK COURT (APPROACH THUS FAR HAS BEEN DEFERRED PENDING COMPLETION OF AMBASSADOR GARBA'S CONSULTATIONS, DURING WHICH HE HAD PROMISED TAKE UP OKONGWU CASE).

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4. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT CHECKING WITH MRS. OKONGWU
RE HER INTENTIONS IN THIS REGARD AND ADVISING EMBASSY
WHETHER CASE MAY NOW BE CONSIDERED CLOSED.
REINHARDT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LAGOS07155
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973083/aaaaabwe.tel
Line Count: 65
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 118186, LAGOS 7037
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <31-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OKONGWU CHILD CUSTODY CASE
TAGS: CASC, (OKONGWU, ANNE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005